

Jenseits des Wachstums?!

Ökologische Gerechtigkeit. Soziale Rechte. Gutes Leben.

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Podium 1: Wachstum, Ausbeutung und globale Gerechtigkeit

Economic growth is often seen as the panacea for all problems in the world. Even a lot of “sustainable development” thinkers, stress that economic growth is necessary for investing in the social and ecological pillar of SD. This is quite nonsense. My input today will show that economic growth will cause more problems than it apparently solves.

“Limits to Growth” is already a book that was written more than 30 years ago. Still in actual policy making limits of environmental and social capital is not recognized. As we look into most of national and European strategies for development, the first indicator is GDP-growth. Our system is totally built on economic growth. How to escape from it?

Economic growth is also unproductive, if it is too much (Herman Daly). The indicator ISEW shows this clearly. Now even World Bank states that continued economic growth is no option any more.

First of all we have to clarify better our goals: economic growth as goal? Or, well, being in a sustainable world for all as goal? And what are the limits? To have a better idea of SD, it is better to use the capital approach of SD (not pillar approach).

We can clearly state, that we are eating our ecological capital. So, globally seen there is no space any more to continue economic growth that is related to the use of natural resources.

We have to work more on redistribution of wealth and use of natural resources. We need to go (cfr climate negotiations) to a model of contraction and convergence, where the industrialized world have to increase there use of natural resources in absolute amounts, to give “space” for the developing countries.

Green economy: what kind of opportunities does this concept give, but also what kind of traps we can fall in? We have to be very carefully to avoid that the Green Economy thinking will only lead to “greening the greed”.